

THE ARMY AT WAR

BY AMERICAN ARTISTS



PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS

LENT BY

THE WAR DEPARTMENT TO THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT

A committee consisting of George Biddle, Chairman, David Finley, Reeves Lewenthal, Henry Varnum Poor and Edward Rowan advised the Army upon the artists to be selected to make an Army War Record. The present exhibition for several reasons is composed of only a portion of the record. In the first place, more work has already been completed by some members of the group than could be shown at one time. Meanwhile a few members have not yet developed their work and one or two of the artists in the Army who are still on distant fronts have not had an opportunity to send back their paintings.

Thanks are due to Life Magazine and to Collier's for their cooperation. Eventually all of this work goes to the Army. In the meantime the paintings by Joe Jones, Edward Laning, Reginald Marsh and Henry Varnum Poor are exhibited by courtesy of Life, while the work of Howard Cook is exhibited by courtesy of Collier's.

The members of the Exhibition Committee are Elinor F. Morgenthau, Dorothea Greenbaum, Edward Rosenfeld, and Forbes Watson.

739.1
Ar59

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF SPONSORS

22 May 44 Enc. 51

MRS. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
Honorary Chairman

MRS. HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.
Chairman

THE VICE PRESIDENT AND MRS. WALLACE

THE CHIEF JUSTICE AND MRS. STONE

UNDER SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY AND MRS. BELL
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND MRS. BIDDLE
JUSTICE AND MRS. BLACK
MISS HARRIET ELLIOTT
MR. AND MRS. DAVID FINLEY
MRS. FELIX FRANKFURTER
THE HONORABLE AND MRS. TED R. GAMBLE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY AND MRS. GASTON
THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND MRS. HULL
THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR AND MRS. ICKES
JUSTICE AND MRS. JACKSON
THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE AND MRS. JONES
THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY AND MRS. KNOX
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF WAR AND MRS. LOVETT
GENERAL AND MRS. GEORGE C. MARSHALL
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF WAR AND MRS. MCCLOY
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY
JUSTICE FRANK MURPHY
UNDER SECRETARY OF WAR AND MRS. PATTERSON
THE HONORABLE AND MRS. RANDOLPH E. PAUL
THE SECRETARY OF LABOR
JUSTICE AND MRS. REED
JUSTICE AND MRS. ROBERTS
JUSTICE AND MRS. RUTLEDGE
THE SECRETARY OF WAR AND MRS. STIMSON
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY AND MRS. SULLIVAN
THE POSTMASTER GENERAL AND MRS. WALKER
THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE AND MRS. WICKARD



THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY
WASHINGTON

We Americans learn slowly about war. We have been taught for twenty years to forget the nature of war, to discount even the very possibility of going to war.

We said, "Wars are out of date. It is impossible to conceive of having a war in this enlightened age". Then we decreed: "If we sink our battleships, diminish our Army and Navy almost to the vanishing point, and thus provide a good example for the other countries, there will never be another war."

But war came just the same.

It is hard for some Americans to realize that while we tried to practice the Golden Rule, a cruel and vicious group of Nazis were training a nation for war; and that on the other side of the world, Japanese War Lords -- human monsters -- plotted to throw into slavery half of the world -- or perhaps all of it -- with sneaking tactics, with sharp steel bayonets and shrieking bullets.

We get news of battle clashes every day. We see photographs -- horrible photographs -- of the aftermath of mortal combat. But combat occupies only a small part of a soldier's life -- and waiting is sometimes more difficult even than fighting.

So perhaps the best way to bring the sensation of a soldier's life to those who have never been soldiers is to let an artist report with his paint brush, and with his heart, what he sees and feels while living -- and waiting -- with soldiers.

That is what this exhibition is intended to do. The Treasury Department considers it a privilege to have a hand in bringing it to the attention of America.



Henry Morgenthau Jr.

WAR DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON, D. C.

The War Department is glad to lend to the Treasury Department this collection of paintings, drawings and sketches, which have come into its possession from various sources since the beginning of this war. Many of the paintings are by leaders in their profession, both civilian and military. All interpret some phase of this war in which Americans are engaged.

It is earnestly hoped that exhibition of these pictures throughout the country by the Treasury Department will bring to the American people a clearer understanding and closer association with the experiences and life of our soldiers. It should inspire a proud determination in all Americans to become an active part of this war, in every possible way.

Henry L. Ekinson

Secretary of War



F O R E W O R D

The pictures in this Army Artist collection bring home in their simple, powerful workmanship, and their subject matter, the straight-thinking and well-organized, hard-hitting Army of today.

There are pictures here which capture the violence and fury of battle. There are also many sketches and paintings to remind us that about ninety percent of a soldier's life at home or abroad is occupied with housekeeping details and mere survival against nature. Finally here are portraits and landscapes which illustrate the fact that the true artist can express his feelings about the war through his portrayal of a face or the character of the countryside.

To glorify war and crown the hero with an aura of incredible valor has often been an appointed function of the artist. But the triumphal arches of the Roman Empire, the equestrian statues of the Renaissance, or David's panegyrics of Napoleon and his Generals would today utterly fail to express the emotions of our people or their leaders. Not one of the artists originally appointed by the Army to record the battlefronts of the war has created an example of mock-heroics. The paintings and drawings in this exhibition vary in personal expression; unite in reflecting the direct and simple attitude toward the hard, ugly truths of today which the great majority, both uniformed and civilians, possess. Our artists have assumed their rightful role in portraying the realism of the day.

The advances of science in the fields of photography and radio have made it possible to record accurately and transmit rapidly events that take place on our battlefronts—land, sea, and air. The significance of these achievements is of tremendous importance in the entire relationship of combatant to noncombatant. The war artist's field of endeavor has undoubtedly been narrowed. There is no longer dependence upon him to record events in detailed "photographic" representations, but he is now happily limited to his own true sphere of pure expression. No matter how faithfully the camera and radio may reproduce the color, form, and sound of warfare, it is still the artist who brings to us the emotions and the spirit, putting heart and soul behind the mechanical embodiments captured by science.

These artists have depicted the greatest Army that our country has ever assembled as it truly is, minus strut and parade. There is an accent on the private. It is the people's war that the artists show us. No Mussolini struts ahead of his servile aides.

no Hitler rants, there is no goose-stepping; not a sign in any of these pictures, of subservience. We see determined fighters who already have won tough, courageous victories. They lie singly in the jungle grass of Guadalcanal, alert, sharp-shooting men. The enemy is invisible, and our own soldiers are camouflaged with such skill that in one or two of these pictures they appear hardly distinguishable from their surroundings.

Whether in actual jungle combat or loafing on a transport, the attitudinizing so characteristic in war painting of the "grand style" is completely absent. No prancing, chesty heroes take the spot-light. Casual and informal off-duty, their movements in action show the reserve agility characteristic of the soldier who is trained for effectiveness in combat and not for showmanship on the parade ground.

I receive these impressions from what our artists have done, although to date the record is incomplete because some of the artists in distant theaters of operation have not yet sent their work back to this country and others have not developed to their satisfaction the sketches which they made "on the spot." Artists differ, naturally, in the pace and manner of working. So we find some painters fully represented here and others showing only a few examples of their work. In time these gaps will be filled, but already the record is impressive.

The true artist is always highly imaginative. Thus he can project to us, by means of so quiescent a subject as a group of soldiers standing by the rail of a transport, or huddled asleep in her depths, a sense of war.

Some people can see the war written on the face of a tired fighter as he sleeps awkwardly between trains on the uncushioned seat of a railway waiting room, and never forget it. Others can read about, and forget too quickly, the sadistic Nazi crimes which have blackened eternally the records of Hitler and his satanic underlings; they can read and forget the miraculous Russian campaign, and the fortitude and courage of Russian men and women. They read of the fighting of our soldiers as they climb through mud and snow and up steep mountains to dig out firmly entrenched Nazis; they read of our war in the treacherous disease-laden jungles; they read about hardship and courage and death—the imaginative remember; the unimaginative forget.

We all know that in the end victory means killing or capturing the enemy. But long before this final act occurs, long before the first battle can be fought, a great Army such as this country has so miraculously organized goes through periods of hardening training, industry, patience, waiting. And after the battle is in progress the modern Army has countless other tasks of repairing, building and supplying, which precede, and also follow in the wake of, the bomb, the shell and the bayonet.

Captain Ralph Ingersoll of the U. S. Army Engineers in his recent account of personal experiences on the African front, "The Battle is the Pay-Off," underscores this point.

" . . . the Army as a whole must survive against nature before it harms a single enemy by even so much as a scratch on the finger. The business of surviving and moving itself from one place to another is ninety percent of the Army's business, and unless it does this well, it is not an Army."

This is why so many of the pictures included in this exhibit depict seemingly unwarlike subjects. They are definitely not the headlines nor the flashes of the commentator or the newsreel, but they are the Army in spirit and in fact, and they are the war.

If the artist concentrated on fighting action alone, leaving out all aspects of the months of preparation, the long voyages with their dreary transport hours, the landings of soldiers and supplies, if he omitted everything except the actual conflict, he would give us an entirely false conception of modern war. He would forget the important point that when you are a soldier it is a life.

As I have already suggested, some artists can read the war in a human face and it is not always a soldier's face. It may be the face of his father or his mother. Or it may be someone sensitive and imaginative enough to apprehend the sufferings of others without the pull of ties.

These artists have reflected in their pictures of war the naturalness that characterizes the American soldier. The varied nature of the lands in which our soldiers fight and live has also been revealed to us as only artists can reveal. Alaska and the Aleutians, North Africa and Italy, Britain, and the Solomons—we see our soldiers in these distantly separated settings and the war comes home to us. In some of the least dramatic of the transport pictures there is reflected patience and courage.

There is complete lack of showmanship in our soldiers. And our artists, too, have worked with naturalness and modesty. It is not easy to be an artist correspondent. You have to prove yourself. As one artist said: "You have to show you know your business before the fighting men will accept you and who can blame them? And when you reach the zone of fighting you have to be a soldier."

Courage, skill, and watchfulness—these are attributes found in good soldiers and good artists, in good fighting and good painting.

ELINOR F. MORGENTHAU

C A T A L O G U E

GEORGE BIDDLE, North African Base

1. Portrait

AARON BOHRD, South Pacific Base

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 2. Street Scene in Noumea. | 12. M. P. in Companionway. |
| 3. Soldiers Landing on Tropical Beach. | 13. Machine-Gunner. |
| 4. Moment Musicale. | 14. Transport Conversation. |
| 5. Marching Through New Georgia. | 15. Street in Noumea. |
| 6. Wounded Prisoner. | 16. Camouflage. |
| 7. C Rations. | 17. Rendova Rendezvous. |
| 8. Unloading Barracks Bags. | 18. Bringing in the Ammo. |
| 9. Moonlight—New Georgia. | 19. Field Dinner. |
| 10. New Georgia Sky. | 20. Still Life, Guadalcanal. |
| 11. Taking Cover. | 21. Beached Transport. |

HOWARD COOK, South Pacific Base

- | | |
|--|---|
| 22. Flying Signal Flags—Sunrise at Equator. | 26. Tooth Brush Time on Lister-Bag Row. |
| 23. Free Running Water in Camp. | 27. Soldiers With Barracks Bags Moving to New Camp. |
| 24. Army Trucks Unloading Supplies From Landing Barges. | 28. Sighting the Four-Inch Antisubmarine Gun. |
| 25. Setting Up New Camp on Coral Beach. | 29. Army Chapel in Banyan Grove. |
| 30. Field Kitchens Before Sunrise in Tropical Mountain Camp. | |

Sergeant OLIN DOWS, England

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 31. Halt During Maneuvers. | 33. Cooking Rations |
| 32. Crossing Stream by Rope Bridge. | 34. Card Game. |

Sergeant ALBERT GOLD, England

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 35. On the Ferry to the Transport. | 40. Sleeping G. I. |
| 36. Organ-Grinder and G. I.s, London. | 41. Soldier Sleeping. |
| 37. Reading the News from Home. | 42. Reading the Home Town Paper |
| 38. Work for the Medical Corps. | Lying in Bed. |
| 39. American Red Cross—Rainbow | 43. Crap Game in the Hangar. |
| Corner. | 44. Chow Line. |

JOE JONES, Alaska

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 45. Harmony in O. D. | 50. Army Cook. |
| 46. Hit Parade of 1943. | 51. Eskimo Man II. |
| 47. A Good Joke. | 52. Fishermen's Wives. |
| 48. Four Soldiers. | 53. Camp at Anchorage. |
| 49. Eskimo Man I. | 54. Guard House Duty, Anchorage. |
| 55. Breaking Camp. | |

EDWARD LANING, Aleutians

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 56. Death in the Snow. | 60. K Rations—Kiska. |
| 57. American Aviator's Grave—Kiska. | 61. First Men on the Beach at Kiska |
| 58. Attu Haircut. | Harbor. |
| 59. Questioning a Prisoner of War. | 62. Massacre Bay—Attu. |
| 63. LST'S at Kiska. | |

REGINALD MARSH, Brazil

- | | |
|--|--|
| 64. Old Destroyer, Naval Base, Recife, | 67. C-54—Natal. |
| Brazil. | 68. C-46—Natal. |
| 65. Interior C-46, Typical Transport | 69. Under Repair. |
| Group. | 70. British Officers, Nurses on Trans- |
| 66. B-24—Natal. | port, Caribbean. |
| 71. British A-30. | |

Captain BARSE MILLER, Southwest Pacific

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 72. Day After Day. | 74. Rest Camp. |
| 73. Native Burris Fiji Islands. | 75. Swaying to the Roll. |
| 76. Navy Gun Crew. | |

OGDEN PLEISSNER, Aleutians

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 77. Planes Over Volcano. | 79. Antiaircraft Gun Position. |
| 78. Aleutian Airport. | 80. Clearing Weather—The Fighter |
| | Strip. |

HENRY VARNUM POOR, Alaska

- | | |
|--|---|
| 81. Elmendorf Field, Anchorage,
Alaska; Hangars and Depot. | 83. Ground Crew, Elmendorf Field,
Anchorage. |
| 82. Major M. R. Marston and Eskimos
Gather in the Little Diomedea
Schoolhouse Called The Light of
the Midnight Sun. | 84. Deck Detail, Inner Passage.
85. Alaskan Transport.
86. Card Game.
87. Self Portrait. |
| 88. Eskimos at Wainwright. | |
| 89. Territorial Guard. | |

Sergeant CHARLES SHANNON, South Pacific

- | | |
|------------------|------------|
| 90. Victory Bar. | 91. Cargo. |
|------------------|------------|

Sergeant MITCHELL SIPORIN, North African Base

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 92. Pantelleria. | 93. Air Raid at Night over Algiers. |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|

Lieutenant FREDE VIDAR, Southwest Pacific

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 94. Afternoon Inactivity. | 95. Pacific Troop Transport. |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|

Sergeant RUDOLPH VON RIPPER, North African Base

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 96. Portrait of a Zouave. | 99. Bomb-Loading at Night. |
| 97. POW Camp Near Constantine. | 100. Briefing—North Africa. |
| 98. View of Pantelleria. | 101. Soldiers and Natives, Africa I. |
| 102. Soldier and Natives, Africa II. | |

🍀 D R A W I N G S 🍀

The drawings in this exhibition are by the following artists:

GEORGE BIDDLE
AARON BOHRD
HOWARD COOK
EDWARD LANING
SERGEANT JACK LEVINE
REGINALD MARSH

HENRY VARNUM POOR
PRIVATE JULIAN RITTER
LIEUTENANT SIDNEY SIMON
SERGEANT SAM SMITH
LIEUTENANT FREDE VIDAR
SERGEANT RUDOLPH VON RIPPER

